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### (54) Lace system for footwear

(57) A boot (2) incorporating techniques for making the process of tightening and loosening the laces of a boot more convenient for the wearer is disclosed. The boot may be provided with at least two independent lacing zones (20,22), the tensions of which are separately adjustable by the wearer. The zones may be secured by pulling on two laces (14,16), each of which tightens one of the two independent lacing zones. This arrangement allows the wearer to simultaneously tighten each zone, providing the wearer with the "feel" as though he or she is tightening a conventional single lacing zone boot. The laces may be simultaneously, yet independently secured by a lace lock (38,64) at the upper and/or forward region of the boot. Slack may be created to facilitate loosening of the boot and easy removal of a foot from the boot by unhooking the lace from the lace guide without a corresponding distance of lace traveling through the lace lock. A release strap (120), graspable by the wearer, facilitates unhooking the lace.

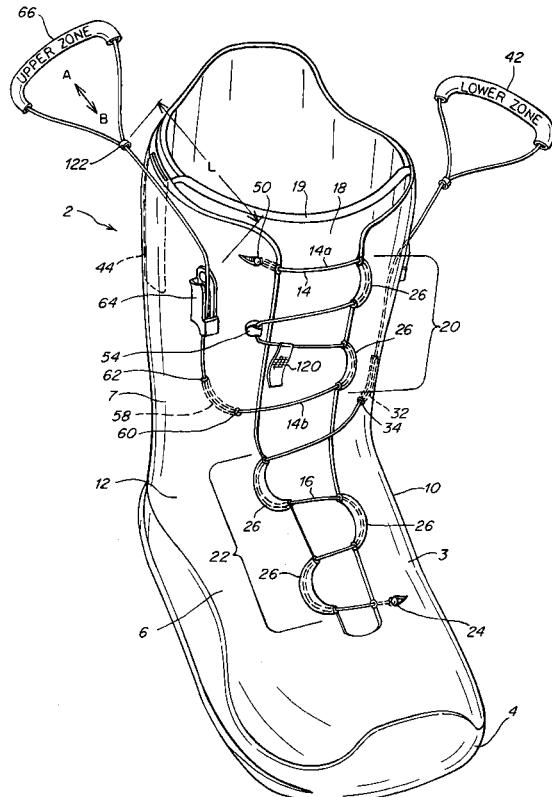


Fig. 1



DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT			CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (Int.Cl.7)
Category	Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages	Relevant to claim	
P, X	WO 2004/093589 A (TECNICA S.P.A; PELLEGRINI, ALFRED) 4 November 2004 (2004-11-04) * page 3 *	1-3, 27-29	A43C11/00 A43B11/00 A43C3/00 A43C7/00 A43C11/14
P, Y	* page 5, lines 4,5; figure 1 *	4-26, 30-52, 127	
X	US 2003/051374 A1 (FREED ANNA B) 20 March 2003 (2003-03-20) * paragraph '0074!; figure 6c *	1-52, 127	
X	DE 101 16 779 C1 (JETTMAR, WERNER) 11 July 2002 (2002-07-11)	53-95	
A	* paragraphs '0010!, '0019!, '0020!, '0022!, '0025! *	96-126	
P, Y	US 2004/078999 A1 (FREED ANNA B) 29 April 2004 (2004-04-29)  * paragraphs '0094!, '0095!, '0098!; figures 6g,7a,7c,7f,7g,7h *	4-26, 30-52, 127	TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (Int.Cl.7)
			A43C A43B
The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			
2	Place of search	Date of completion of the search	Examiner
	The Hague	7 June 2005	Claude1, B
CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS		T : theory or principle underlying the invention E : earlier patent document, but published on, or after the filing date D : document cited in the application L : document cited for other reasons ..... & : member of the same patent family, corresponding document	
X : particularly relevant if taken alone Y : particularly relevant if combined with another document of the same category A : technological background O : non-written disclosure P : intermediate document			

**CLAIMS INCURRING FEES**

The present European patent application comprised at the time of filing more than ten claims.

Only part of the claims have been paid within the prescribed time limit. The present European search report has been drawn up for the first ten claims and for those claims for which claims fees have been paid, namely claim(s):

No claims fees have been paid within the prescribed time limit. The present European search report has been drawn up for the first ten claims.

**LACK OF UNITY OF INVENTION**

The Search Division considers that the present European patent application does not comply with the requirements of unity of invention and relates to several inventions or groups of inventions, namely:

see sheet B

All further search fees have been paid within the fixed time limit. The present European search report has been drawn up for all claims.

As all searchable claims could be searched without effort justifying an additional fee, the Search Division did not invite payment of any additional fee.

Only part of the further search fees have been paid within the fixed time limit. The present European search report has been drawn up for those parts of the European patent application which relate to the inventions in respect of which search fees have been paid, namely claims:

None of the further search fees have been paid within the fixed time limit. The present European search report has been drawn up for those parts of the European patent application which relate to the invention first mentioned in the claims, namely claims:



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**LACK OF UNITY OF INVENTION  
SHEET B**

Application Number

EP 04 02 9221

The Search Division considers that the present European patent application does not comply with the requirements of unity of invention and relates to several inventions or groups of inventions, namely:

1. claims: 1-52, 127

Footwear with two lacing zones

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2. claims: 53-126

Footwear with a quick release system

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**ANNEX TO THE EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT  
ON EUROPEAN PATENT APPLICATION NO.**

EP 04 02 9221

This annex lists the patent family members relating to the patent documents cited in the above-mentioned European search report. The members are as contained in the European Patent Office EDP file on The European Patent Office is in no way liable for these particulars which are merely given for the purpose of information.

07-06-2005

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